

## DEALING WITH AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND/OR INFESTATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

Sections 172, 174, Regulations 85-88, 103, 168-173, 175

# DEALING WITH AN INFECTIOUS DISEASE AND/OR INFESTATION POLICY

### Policy Statement

This policy aims to establish guidelines and procedures for dealing with infectious diseases and infestations at the Early Learning & Community Centre, in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and other relevant authorities. It is our commitment to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children, staff, and visitors by preventing the spread of infectious diseases and addressing infestations promptly and effectively.

### Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to dealing with infectious diseases. Infectious diseases can spread rapidly in education and care services. As noted in the National Health and Medical Research Council's Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, when children – especially younger children – are in close contact with others, they often put objects in their mouths, and they may not always cover their coughs or sneezes. As some bacteria and viruses can survive on surfaces, children may touch a contaminated surface, then put their hands in their mouth and become infected. Additionally, if a child has an ill family member at home, they could be incubating the illness, and risk bringing germs from home into the service. It is for this reason that it is especially important for our service to have effective policies and procedures in place that can promote awareness of infectious diseases and safe hygiene practices, that help to prevent any infectious disease from occurring, and outline the processes to manage any outbreak.

### National Quality Standards (NQS) Links

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Wellbeing and comfort	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service.

### Legislative requirements

#### **Regulation 85 Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures**

- *The Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policies and Procedures must be followed by nominated supervisor, staff members and volunteers when a child is injured, becomes ill or suffers a trauma.*

#### **Regulation 86 Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness**

- *The Centre must ensure the parent or authorised caregiver is notified by the Centre as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after the occurrence, if the child is involved in any incident, injury, trauma or illness that occurs at the service.*

#### **Regulation 87 Incident, injury, trauma and illness record**

- *Incident, injury, trauma and illness record is kept in line with this regulation.*

#### **Regulation 88 Infectious disease**

- *If an infectious disease occurs, the approved provider must ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of the infectious disease and the parent or authorised emergency contact of each child at the Centre are notified as soon as practicable.*

#### **Regulation 103 Premise, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair**

- *To ensure the spread of an infectious disease, the premises, furniture and equipment must be kept clean and safe.*

#### **Regulation 168 – Education and care services must have policies and procedures**

- *Our Centre has policies and procedures as set out in sub regulation 2 in Regulation 168.*

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### Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed

- Nominated supervisors, staff members and volunteers all have an understanding of all policies and procedures and ensure they are followed at the service.

### Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available

- Digital copies of our policies and procedures are available via a QR code in our foyer, in our digital PowerQIP and in our handbook. A hard copy of our policies and procedures can be found in the ELCC Office.

### Regulation 172 – Notification of change of policies and procedures

- All families are notified and sent updated policies and procedures.
- If a change to policy is planned, significantly affecting families, they will be given 14 days' notice.

### Regulation 175 – Prescribed information to be notified to the Regulatory Authority

- Any circumstance arising at the Centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or children to be reported to the Regulatory Authority.

### Principles to inform the policy:

All decision-making should be carried out in accordance with the principles of our Centre's Infectious Disease and Infestation Policy.

- Children's health, safety and wellbeing is a priority. We implement all regulatory requirements in this regard, including any jurisdictional conditions relating to enrolling children who are not up to date with their vaccinations. We also adopt quality practices to help prevent and manage any occurrences of infectious diseases, recognising in particular the effectiveness of good hygiene (eg washing hands regularly).
- Our educators and staff play an important role in safeguarding the children's health, safety and wellbeing. We equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to enable them to deal with infectious diseases and to role model hygiene practices.
- We support children to take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing. Our educators and staff model health and personal hygiene practices with children and reinforce these messages with families.
- We recognise the contribution of families in helping to prevent illness and disease at the service. As part of the enrolment process and ongoing communications, we advise them about our hygiene and the infection control practices and procedures.

### Key Terms:

- **ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority):** The independent national authority that administers the National Quality Framework.
- **Exclusion period:** Families keeping their children at home in the event of illness or disease within the service. The aim is to reduce the spread of infectious diseases in the service, as the less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease and people who are at risk of catching the disease, the less chance the disease has of spreading.
- **Immunisation:** Immunisation can prevent some infections. It works by giving a person a vaccine – often a dead or modified version of the germ – against a particular disease. This makes the person's immune system respond in a similar way to how it would respond if they actually had the disease, but with less severe symptoms. If the person comes in contact with that germ in the future, their immune system can rapidly respond and prevent the person becoming ill. Immunisation also protects other people who are not immunised, such as children who are too young to be immunised, or people whose immune systems did not respond to the vaccine. This is because the more people who are immunised against a disease, the lower the chance that a person will ever come into contact with someone who has the disease (also known as herd immunity). For families to receive the Child Care Subsidy and Family Tax Benefit (FTB) Part A, their child must meet the immunisation requirements. Jurisdictional requirements may also prevent children who are not immunised from attending a service.
- **Infectious disease:** A disease that is designated under a law of a relevant jurisdiction or by a health authority as a disease that would require a person with the disease to be excluded from an education and care service.
- **Infestation:** The presence and rapid multiplication of pests, insects, or parasites in the service premises.

### Links to other policies:

This policy is linked to related policies and procedures, including:

- Providing a child safe environment
- Enrolment and orientation
- Dealing with medical conditions in children
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness

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- The administration of First Aid
- Delivery of children to, and collection from, education and care premises
- Water safety
- Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements
- Governance and management

### **Induction and Ongoing Training:**

- Induction training and ongoing training will be provided to managers, coordinators, educators, and staff to assist them in fulfilling their roles effectively in implementing this policy.

### **Policy Created/Reviewed:**

- This policy was created in January 2024 and will be reviewed annually or as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and alignment with best practices.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:**

- This policy will be regularly monitored for compliance by designated staff members and reviewed as necessary to ensure it aligns with current regulations and guidelines.

### **References:**

1. ACECQA
2. South Australian Health Policy and Regulations
3. Catholic Education South Australia Policy and Regulations

Reviewed by David Mezinec  
*Tenison Woods College Principal*



**Signed:**  
**Dated: 18.7.24**

Reviewed by Fran Scanlon  
*Early Learning & Community Centre Director*



**Signed:**  
**Dated: 15.7.24**

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### **Procedure statement:**

Our 'Dealing with an Infectious Disease and/or Infestation Policy' at the Early Learning & Community Centre prioritises the health, safety, and wellbeing of all individuals. Rooted in national regulations, the policy is easily accessible in our foyer, digital platforms, and handbook. Aligned with our overarching philosophy, it underscores our commitment to evidence-based quality practices, empowering educators, staff, and children to promote good hygiene. Through ongoing communication, we engage families in fostering a collective responsibility for a safe and healthy environment.

### **Procedures:**

#### *Infection Control Measures:*

- Staff will promote and practice regular handwashing and hygiene routines.
- All toys, equipment, and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitised regularly (Appendix 1 – displayed in all rooms and laundry areas). Specifically:
  - All equipment to be cleaned and sanitised at the end of each term and labelled when it was cleaned.
  - Equipment to be washed when mouthed by a child or a bodily fluid.
  - All equipment to be wash and cleaned weekly in rooms.
  - Equipment to be washed and sanitised before placed back in the Resource room. Label and date of when it was cleaned.
- Children and/or staff with symptoms of infectious diseases, guidelines will be followed in line with SA Health and if needed will be excluded from the service and advised to seek medical attention.
- Staff will follow protocols outlined in 'ELCC soiled, blood or faeces protocol' (Appendix 2) ensuring there is not spread of disease, cleaning protocols are followed and children are quite safe at all times.
- Any child or staff member diagnosed with a notifiable infectious disease will be reported to the regulatory authority promptly and guidelines will be followed in line with SA Health.
- Adequate ventilation will be provided to minimise the risk of airborne disease transmission. No aerosols will not be used to ensure asthmatic children are not affected.

#### *Notifications:*

- Parents or authorised emergency contacts will be informed immediately if a child shows symptoms of an infectious disease and asked to collect the child.
- A notice will be displayed at the service premises, providing information about the occurrence of an infectious disease if considered an outbreak. Two cases constitutes an outbreak. (Section 172, Regulation 173).
- The regulatory authority will be notified in case of an infectious disease outbreak that poses a risk to children's health (Section 174, Regulation 175).

#### *Illness register:*

- Staff to keep a register of sickness in the Centre
- This occurs on OneNote, with all staff having access to update
- This is to keep track of illness in the Centre and to ensure an outbreak is known and can be tracked.

#### *Infestations:*

- Regular inspections will be conducted to identify and address infestation risks.
- Prompt action will be taken to manage infestations effectively, following the recommendations of recognised authorities.
- Parents will be notified if the service identifies an infestation concern that could affect children's health and safety.

#### *Covid 19*

- Directives from the Federal and State Governments will be adhered to by families and staff.
- Catholic Education South Australia, inline with the regulation bodies, has provided the following advice and protocols for the Centre:
  - *If you are unwell, staff member or child to stay home.*
  - *If a staff member or child have cold or flu symptoms, advised to be tested for COVID-19.*

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- *If a staff member or child have COVID-19, asked to stay at home until your acute symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, cough and fever) have cleared.*
- *In consideration for the health of others, when you return to the Centre, staff are advised to wear a mask while indoors until 7 days have passed since your symptoms first started or since you tested positive (whichever is earliest, this however is optional).*

*For further advice and information - <https://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au/news/alerts>*

### Roles and responsibilities:

The approved provider will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met;
- Ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of any infectious disease at the service;
- Ensuring that families or an authorised emergency contact of the children attending are notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable and in a manner that is not prejudicial to the rights of any child, educator or staff member;
- Displaying a notice stating there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the service premises;
- Meeting jurisdictional requirements relating to the enrolment or attendance of children who are not up-to-date with their scheduled vaccinations;
- Implementing exclusion periods consistent with current information from a relevant recognised authority;
- Ensuring notification requirements to the regulatory authority are met in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children attending the service;
- Ensuring the premises, furniture and equipment are kept safe, clean and well maintained, including high risk areas (eg bathroom, toilet, nappy change area, sandpit), furniture (eg cots), clothing, linen, and equipment (eg toys, carpets, mats);
- Taking reasonable steps to ensure the nominated supervisor, educators and staff follow the policy and procedures;
- Ensuring copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, co-ordinators, educators and staff, and available for inspection;
- Notifying families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will:
  - Affect the fees charged or the way they are collected; or
  - Significantly impact the service's education and care of children or • significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

The nominated supervisor and responsible person (Director) will be responsible for:

- Implementing the Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedures;
- Ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to prevent the spread of any infectious disease at the service;
- Ensuring that families or an authorised emergency contact of children attending are notified of the occurrence as soon as practicable and in a manner that is not prejudicial to the rights of any child, educator or staff member;
- Displaying a notice stating there has been an occurrence of an infectious disease at the premises;
- Meeting jurisdictional requirements relating to the enrolment or attendance of children who are not up-to-date with their scheduled vaccinations;
- Implementing exclusion periods consistent with current information from a relevant recognised authority;
- Ensuring premises, furniture and equipment are kept safe, clean and well maintained
- Promoting hygiene practices with all children, families, educators and staff;
- Ensuring that notification requirements to the regulatory authority are met in relation to an outbreak of an infectious disease that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children attending the service;

The educators will be responsible for:

- Implementing the Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedures;
- Monitoring children's health, safety and wellbeing on a daily basis and manage accordingly;
- Being immunised against infectious diseases as recommended by recognised authorities
- Staying at home if unwell or having an excludable infectious disease;
- Employing and role modelling good hygiene practices for cleaning hands, nappy changing, toileting and food handling;
- Integrating infection control awareness, hygiene and protective practices into educational programming and planning;
- Communicating with families about infectious diseases in general and specific expectations within the service (eg exclusion periods).

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The families will be responsible for:

- Being familiar with, and following, the service's Dealing with infectious diseases policy and procedures;
- Providing immunisation documentation upon enrolment and as immunisations are administered;
- Keeping their child at home if they are unwell or having an excludable infectious disease;
- Keeping their child at home if there is an infectious disease at the service and their child is not fully immunised against it;
- Informing the service if their child has an infectious disease or has been in contact with a person who has an infectious disease.

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### Appendix 1 – ELCC Cleaning Protocols

#### ELCC CLEANING PROTOCOL

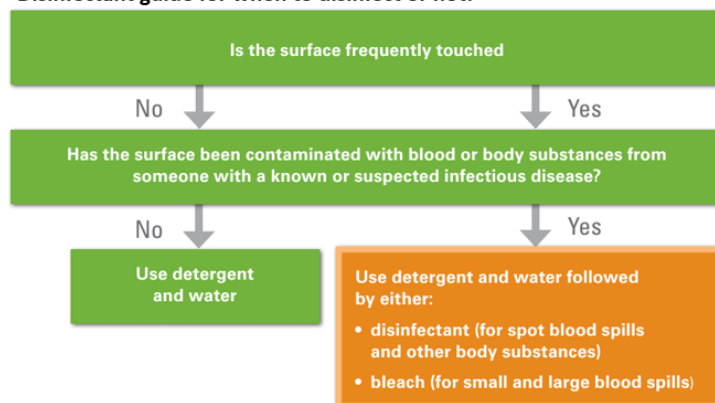
	Twice daily	Wash daily	Wash Weekly and when visibly dirty	Wash monthly	Wash termly
Toys and object in mouth or covered with bodily fluids		✓			
Toys in room			✓		
All resources in Centre					✓
Soft furnishings (pillows, etc)				✓	
Beds, linen and mattress covers		✓			
Bathrooms, wash taps, toilet seats, toilet handles and doorknobs	✓				
Doorknobs		✓			
Surfaces children have frequent contact with (Bench tops, taps, cots and tables)	✓				
Floors		✓			
Shelves and cupboards			✓		

#### ELCC CLEANING PROTOCOL

##### Basic steps for effective routine cleaning

- Use detergent and warm water. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how much detergent to use.
- Vigorously rub the surface to physically remove germs.
- Rinse the surface with clean water.
- Dry the surface.

##### Disinfectant guide for when to disinfect or not:



Adapted from National Health and Medical Research Council 2010, *Australian guidelines for the prevention and control of infection in healthcare*, NHMRC, Canberra.

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### Appendix 2 – ELCC Soiled, Blood or Faeces Protocol

#### ELCC SOILED, BLOOD OR FAECES PROTOCOL

ALL STAFF TO WEAR GLOVES BEFORE DEALING WITH ANY BODILY FLUID. IF UNSURE ASK A DIPLOMA, TEACHER OR ELCC LEADER

	Soiled	Blood	Faeces
<b>Underwear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In nappy bag</li> <li>- Parents notified on Spike</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In nappy bag</li> <li>- Parents notified on Spike</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If diahorrea or a great deal, pants are thrown away</li> <li>- Parents rang, if more than once with diahorrea, the child is to be picked up</li> <li>- If small amount place in nappy bag and store in the laundry</li> <li>- Parents notified via Spike</li> </ul>
<b>Clothes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In nappy bag</li> <li>- Parents notified on Spike</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In nappy bag and stored in the laundry</li> <li>- Parents rung as to why there is blood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In nappy bag and stored in the laundry</li> <li>- Parents rung as to why there is faeces</li> </ul>
<b>Soft toys/ furnishing and linen</b>	Soaked in 'soiled' bucket and washed separately to other washing.	Soaked in 'blood' bucket and washed separately to other washing.	Soaked in 'faeces' bucket and washed separately to other washing.
<b>In the Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detergent and warm water to wash down area, mop up with disposable paper or cloth.</li> <li>- Place in bag and dispose of in the outside bin</li> <li>- Spray with <u>Eucyfresh</u> and wipe down, allowing to air dry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detergent and warm water to wash down area, mop up with disposable paper or cloth.</li> <li>- Place in bag and dispose of in the outside bin</li> <li>- Spray with <u>Eucyfresh</u> and wipe down, allowing to air dry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detergent and warm water to wash down area, mop up with disposable paper or cloth.</li> <li>- Place in bag and dispose of in the outside bin</li> <li>- Spray with <u>Eucyfresh</u> and wipe down, allowing to air dry.</li> </ul>

Taken from 'Safely dealing with spills,' Staying Healthy 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Australian Government – National Health and Medical Research Council, June 2013.